

and Mr. Hencely was one of 16 soldiers who were injured. He was immediately transported to Germany for treatment and surgery, but is currently in critical condition.

This attack is a sobering reminder of the harsh reality that our soldiers must endure during their deployment.

I encourage everyone to keep our Nation's soldiers in their thoughts and, especially, Mr. Winston Hencely during his time of need.

Mr. Hencely, thank you for your service to our country, and we will be with you every step of the way.

RECOGNIZING JOHN RUTLEDGE

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Mr. John Rutledge, who passed away on September 11, 2016, at the age of 96.

Mr. Rutledge's life has been quite extraordinary as he has been on hand for some incredible events in our Nation's history.

On December 7, 1941, Mr. Rutledge was aboard the USS California during the attack on Pearl Harbor, narrowly escaping with his life. The next year, he was at the Battle of Midway in the Pacific Ocean, covering the battle as a photographer and filming the burning of Japanese ships.

Mr. Rutledge continued his service to our Nation long after his time with the military and fighting in World War II. For the next 20 years, he taught science classes at Pensacola High School.

I am proud to honor someone who dedicated so much of his life to the betterment of our Nation.

Mr. Rutledge, you will be greatly missed.

FINDING CURES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of legislation that begins making strides toward enhancing our ability to combat some of the toughest diseases of our time—the 21st Century Cures Act.

From improving the development and approval process of drugs and devices, to bettering our ability to diagnose and treat diseases like Alzheimer's and diabetes, this legislation will have a positive impact on countless lives.

I further applaud provisions in the bill that address mental health issues and opioid abuse, both crises that tear families apart in my home district of St. Louis and across our Nation.

However, I also rise today to say that passing this bill must not be the end of our efforts, but, rather, the beginning—the beginning as we look towards a better day for thousands of children fighting against pediatric cancers.

Mr. Speaker, the 21st Century Cures Act legislation outlines that rare and pediatric diseases and conditions should remain a biomedical research priority. While the bill provides an additional \$4.8 billion to the National In-

stitutes of Health, I see little that suggests a sufficient amount of this money will be dedicated to pediatric research and care.

This past October, I had the opportunity to tour the Cardinals Kids Cancer Center at Mercy Hospital in St. Louis and meet with families affected by pediatric cancer, including the Leslie family. The Leslies' son, Caleb, was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma, a rare type of bone cancer, when he was just 10 years old. Despite the incredible strength that Caleb showed in his more than 2-year fight with cancer, he ultimately lost the battle on July 22, 2015.

I was shocked when the Leslies told me that childhood cancer receives only 4 percent of the National Cancer Institute's annual research budget—only 4 percent—an absurdly small amount of money for a population with countless life years ahead of them.

In fiscal year 2016, the NCI was appropriated \$5.21 billion, and only \$208 million of this went toward childhood cancer research. Childhood cancer does not discriminate based on gender, race, or social class. These are diseases that could affect any of our children at any time.

It is my hope that going forward, as both a lawmaker and a mother of three children, that we can prioritize NCI research funding to give every child a fighting chance at a healthy and happy future.

I am committed to giving families like the Leslies solace, solace in knowing that maybe one less family will have to suffer the tragic loss that they endured.

GATLINBURG FIRE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, Tennesseans have experienced the worst of Mother Nature this week—from the tornadoes in my own district to the historic wildfires that ravaged the Gatlinburg community. These fires forced a mass evacuation, destroyed hundreds of homes and businesses, and tragically caused three known fatalities so far.

Today I rise to call for prayer for our neighbors in the beautiful Smoky Mountains region of our State, to remember those precious lives lost, and to recognize our heroic first responders who have worked diligently to contain the damage.

As the work continues, we pray that healing rain would fall, literally, across eastern Tennessee this week, that businesses would be able to quickly reopen, and that visitors would once again flock to this treasured region of our State to experience all that Gatlinburg has to offer.

FIDEL CASTRO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, last week marked the death of the tyrant in Cuba, Fidel Castro. This is a man whose regime was marked by the suppression of God-given rights—the right to religion, to speech, to assemble.

The people who disagreed with the regime in Castro's Cuba were jailed or tortured. People who had spent their lives building businesses, restaurants, and hotels had their property confiscated after the Cuban revolution. People were executed by the thousands who ran afoul of the regime.

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Now, in pre-Castro Cuba, you had economic opportunity and prosperity, but you did have a yearning for democratic reforms. It was effectively an authoritarian system, and Castro capitalized on this by pointing out that we needed to have free elections. There were people who supported Castro initially because they thought he was going to usher in democratic reforms. He duped people. Once he had the opportunity to seize power, he sided with the Soviet Union and imposed a Stalinist tyranny on the small island nation.

I think it is interesting, when people look back, to see how poorly Cuba has done under his rule. Compare that with a lot of the Cuban exiles who left Castro's tyranny. These are people—many of them—who came to Florida. A lot of them didn't speak the language. They were in a new country and didn't necessarily have a whole lot of advantages; yet Cuban Americans, in our country, have excelled at all levels—in business, in government, in athletics, in entertainment. You name it.

Meanwhile, you look at the people, over the last decades, in Cuba, and unless you are attached to the ruling class—the regime—to the intelligence services, or to the military, you basically have no shot to do anything to advance your life and to make the most of your God-given abilities. Of the Cuban exiles who came to Florida, a lot of them were responsible for really putting Miami on the map. I think that shows that, when you have folks fleeing from a tyranny and going to freedom, they can succeed beyond people's wildest dreams, but the people who are suffering under the tyranny just have nowhere to go.

It is funny because, if you look at some of the media reports, Castro is lauded by some as an egalitarian—that this was a big deal that he was an egalitarian. Look, I have to admit that part of that was true. I mean, he was an egalitarian in the sense that he inflicted the equal suffering—equal misery—upon broad cross-sections of the Cuban people. That much is true, but it is obviously false in the sense that his thing was not egalitarianism. It was to amass power for himself. He died a billionaire. This was the avant-garde of the working class, supposedly. He was a billionaire while many Cubans struggled to even eat, and, certainly, they could not prosper.